



**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON
NATIONAL CAPITAL AND EXTERNAL TERRITORIES**

Inquiry into the adequacy of funding for Australia's Antarctic Program

MEDIA ALERT

Issued: Wednesday 15 October

New Inquiry

**Is Australia's Antarctic Program receiving
adequate funding?
- Public submissions sought -**

Federal Parliament's External Territories Committee is to conduct an inquiry into the adequacy of funding for Australia's Antarctic Program as part of its review of the annual report of the Department of the Environment and Heritage 2001-02.

In particular the Committee will consider the adequacy of funding to meet the four goals set for advancing Australia's Antarctic interests:

- enhancing Australia's influence in the Antarctic Treaty system;
- protecting the Antarctic environment;
- understanding Antarctica's role in the global climate system; and
- conducting scientific research of practical, economic or national significance.

Written submissions are sought from interested persons and organisations. Submissions should be lodged with the committee secretariat by Friday 5 December 2003. The inquiry will be advertised in Wednesday's *Australian*, *Hobart Mercury* and *West Australian*.

For further information concerning the inquiry: contact Quinton Clements in the Secretariat of the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories on (02) 6277 2135 or via email at jscncet@aph.gov.au. Or visit the Committee's website at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/ncet

**For media comment, please contact Senator Ross Lightfoot, Chairman,
Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories, on (02) 6277 3626**

Members of the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories are:

- Senator Ross Lightfoot (*Chairman*) (Liberal Party of Australia, WA)
- Senator Trish Crossin (*Deputy Chair*) (Australian Labor Party, NT)
- Senator John Hogg (Australian Labor Party, QLD)
- Senator Kate Lundy (Australian Labor Party, ACT)
- Senator Nigel Scullion (Country Liberal Party, NT)
- Senator Natasha Stott Despoja (Australian Democrats, SA)
- Hon Ian Causley MP (National Party of Australia, Page, NSW)
- Ms Annette Ellis MP (Australian Labor Party, Canberra, ACT)
- Mr Michael Johnson MP (Liberal Party of Australia, Ryan, QLD)
- Mr Paul Neville MP (National Party of Australia, Hinkler, QLD)
- Hon Warren Snowdon MP (Australian Labor Party, Lingiari, NT)
- Mr Cameron Thompson MP (Liberal Party of Australia, Blair, QLD)

BACKGROUND

The Australian Antarctic Division (AAD) is the part of the Department of the Environment and Heritage responsible for administering Australia's wide-ranging activities in Antarctic and sub-Antarctic regions.

Australia's interests in Antarctica are advanced through the Australian Antarctic Division as the primary agency for Australia's Antarctic Program. Some of the Division's responsibilities include:

- administering the Australian Antarctic Territory and the Territory of Heard and McDonald Islands;

- undertaking scientific research and monitoring, and providing the infrastructure in the region to support other Australian agencies;
- promoting Antarctic research in universities through grants and the provision of logistic support;
- developing policy proposals and providing advice on Australia's interests in Antarctica;
- promoting Australia's interests within the Australian Antarctic Treaty System (in conjunction with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade); and
- maintaining a continuing presence in the region through permanent stations, the establishment of summer field bases and the provision of transport, communications and medical services.

Further information about the Australian Antarctic Division and their role in Australia's Antarctic Program can be found at the Division's website: www.aad.gov.au